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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 064075

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PASS TO ALL USAID MISSIONS
FOR MANAGEMENT COUNSELORS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OFFICERS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ALOW](#) [AMGT](#) [APER](#) [AFIN](#)

SUBJECT: Keeping Foreign Area Per Diem Rates
Current

1. All Federal agencies, as well as Federal contractors, many non-governmental and international organizations, and private companies, utilize the Department of State-managed Foreign Area Per Diem Rates to determine appropriate levels of support for lodging and meals / incidental expenses while on official or business travel. Keeping those per diem rates up to date is a collaborative effort by our overseas posts and the Office of Allowances.

2. The Department of State's Office of Allowances is responsible for maintaining foreign area per diem rates. This includes, primarily, the analysis of hotel and restaurant cost data submitted by diplomatic and consular posts and publication of updated rates on a regular basis.

3. For Department of State offices, the eAllowances application was developed initially in 2006 to automate the submission of Hotel and Restaurant Report survey data, previously collected and submitted on hard-copy forms. That original eAllowances function has been retained, even while eAllowances now automates the submission of other allowance and differential reporting. eAllowances permits much more rapid and accurate updating of per diem rates.

4. The Office of Allowances issues updated per diem rates only once per month, with an effective date of the first calendar date of the month. We cannot make "interim" changes for a variety of reasons, but primarily due to the extensive use of automation in the travel process throughout the U.S. Government and private sector. All per diem rates denominated in a foreign currency are reviewed monthly for the impact of exchange rate fluctuations. New surveys must be received in the Office of Allowances via eAllowances prior to opening of business in Washington on the 20th of the month in order to ensure they are analyzed/published effective the first calendar day of the following month. Please note: if the 20th of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, surveys must be received on the last normal Washington business day preceding the 20th.

5. The following are key points to remember:

(a) Submit Updated Hotel & Restaurant Data Annually: Ensuring that the rates / costs are checked at least once a year reassures all travelers of their accuracy. Please note that hotel and restaurant cost data received via eAllowances prior to the 20th calendar day of the month will be analyzed for publication with an effective date of the first calendar day of the next month (e.g. a survey received on June 17 would carry an effective date of July 1). Survey data received

after the 20th calendar day will not be published until the following month (e.g. a survey received on June 21 would carry an effective date of August 1).

(b) Make Per Diem Rate Reviews a Part of Special Event Planning: POTUS visits, summits, major conferences and other events all can quickly make the "normal" published rate obsolete, even if only for a very short period of time. The simplest route is to ensure travelers are authorized "actual expenses" at up to 300% of the published per diem rate per 14 FAM 576.2-2 or FTR 301-11.303. Sometimes even that is not adequate. In such cases, Allowances can make a short term change to per diem rates - - just make sure you communicate early in the planning process with the Allowances Team Supervisor covering your region (see para 6). You'll need to start by providing the reason for a short term adjustment; later, you'll need to submit via eAllowances the special cost data in the timeline outlined in paragraph 4, above.

(c) Consider Other Locations: If there are other sites where USG employees / contractors travel relatively frequently, but that are not listed as separate locations, please consider collecting and submitting survey data for those locations. It matters not whether the employees / contractors are under COM authority. Consult with the Allowance Team Supervisor for your region (see para 6) to determine if the location needs to be added to the eAllowances location table and then activated so that you can enter the data. Likewise, if you find that a site now listed separately is no longer a frequent TDY destination, please contact your Team Supervisor about eliminating it from the listings and saving you the work of reporting on it.

16. Contact information for the Office of Allowances is found on our OpenNet site at <http://aoprals.a.state.gov> and on the

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internet at <http://aoprals.state.gov>. Select "About Us: Information" at the bottom of the left navigation bar where you will find contact information and geographical assignments for Team Supervisors Audrey Thurman and Joyce McNeil. For general inquiries, email AllowancesO@state.gov. That mailbox is monitored by Regulations Specialist Marco Cuniberti. Urgent matters can be called into Allowances during normal Washington business hours at (202) 261-8700.

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CLINTON